

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### WHEATLAND STEEL PROCESSING

Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center

#### Wheatland Steel Processing Achieves Iso 9000 Certification

##### Client Profile:

Wheatland Steel Processing, located in Hermitage, Pennsylvania, runs a steel coil processing and stamping operation. Founded in 1973 as a steel pickling facility and restructured in 1998, the company employs 27 full-time and 2 part-time employees.

##### Situation:

Wheatland Steel Processing (Wheatland) has an established relationship with its sister company, Graham Stamping, which is located in the same industrial complex. Wheatland occasionally subcontracts to produce parts for Graham Stamping Company, which in turn supplies a Tier-1 automotive customer. Graham Stamping asked that Wheatland achieve ISO 9000 registration to meet its obligation as a Tier-2 automotive supplier. Wheatland agreed, and contacted the Northwest Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

##### Solution:

NWIRC determined that Wheatland, which already had an effective but informal quality system in place, needed to complete steps to formalize the system in compliance with ISO 9000 requirements. NWIRC provided Wheatland with an overview of ISO 9000, made arrangements for it to participate in an ISO seminar, and helped the company secure the services of Touchstone Development Group of Hermitage, Pennsylvania, a consulting firm that has a strong track record of helping companies achieve ISO 9000 registration.

NWIRC and Touchstone Development Group worked directly with the company beginning in December 2002, when Wheatland Steel Processing began to take steps to develop a quality system that would meet the standards of ISO 9000-2000.

First Wheatland needed to document its processes in a quality manual. The company explored several existing software programs, but found that none of the available products could produce a document specific to the company's needs. Touchstone Development Group worked with Wheatland to simplify the process and helped it write a manual from scratch. The resulting document is specific, all-inclusive, and meaningful to Wheatland and its employees.

In May 2003, the company began the program's implementation throughout the organization. With guidance from Touchstone Development Group, Wheatland installed all the quality procedures on its computer network, including the manual, procedures, work instructions, meeting times, yearly calendar, and so



# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

forth. Now this information is readily available to all employees. NWIRC helped Wheatland apply for and obtain training funds, and provided quality and internal auditor training to company employees.

In August 2003, the company began preparations for the ISO 9000 registration audit, and in September NSFISR (an official registration body) completed the ISO 9000 audit for Wheatland Steel Processing. On October 7, 2003, Wheatland Steel Processing received notification that the registrar had approved the findings of the audit.

By registering to the ISO standard, Wheatland has improved its competitive position in the state and increased its capabilities. It is able to offer one-stop services to existing and prospective customers, and has never missed a shipment.

### **Results:**

Achieved ISO 9000 certification.

Improved customer satisfaction.

Increased profits.

Improved internal communication.

Created a structured method for continuous improvement.

Reduced return rates to zero.

### **Testimonial:**

,